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MANEUVER WARFARE AND MARINE CORPS AVIATION

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL STEPHEN D. HALEY, USMC

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MANEUVER WARFARE AND MARINE CORPS AVIATION

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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ABSTRACT

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With the publication of FMFM-1 on the 6th of March, 1989 Maneuver Warfare officially became the Marine Corps' doctrine for warfighting. This doctrine is still not well understood Corps wide and is certainly not understood in the context of employment of Marine Air Ground Task Forces. This study has a target audience of U.S. Marines and has been written based on a Marine's understanding of maneuver warfare concepts. This study seeks to examine maneuver warfare as it applies to Marines today. Initially, the study examines the role military history, particularly the German experience, has had in the formation of the concepts associated with maneuver warfare. The study also addresses the responsibility of the commander as this responsibility applies to maneuver warfare concepts and techniques. Further, this study examines the applicability of maneuver warfare to the Marine Air Ground Task Force. Additionally, the study assesses the impact of maneuver warfare doctrine on Marine Aviation and in turn the impact Marine Aviation can have on this philosophy of warfighting. Finally, conclusions are drawn based on this study.

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MANEUVER WARFARE AND MARINE CORPS AVIATION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For more than 10 years, Marines have been involved in an ongoing debate over the relevance and applicability of maneuver warfare to the Corps. This debate is finally over. The Commandant's signature on FMFM-1, Warfighting, established maneuver warfare as the official doctrine for warfighting in the Marine Corps.

FMFM-1 has been published to serve as the basis for a new style of warfighting for the Corps. The 'intent' is clear from its beginning, "The thoughts contained here represent not just guidance for actions in combat, but a way of thinking in general. This manual thus describes a philosophy for action which, in war and in peace, in the field and in the rear, dictates our approach to duty."1 Further, "All peacetime activities should focus on achieving combat readiness."2 "Any military activities that do not contribute to the conduct of a present war are justifiable only if they contribute to preparedness for a future one."3 The message to the reader is clear--the Corps' primary focus of effort must be directed to improving its

warfighting capability.

Clausewitz concluded that Napoleon embodied the traits of 'military genius'.⁴ It was Napoleon's 'military genius' that established a new era of warfare and enabled Napoleon to lead his armies to so many victories. Clausewitz further concluded that dependence upon producing a 'military genius' at the right time and place in history was an unacceptable approach to national security. Accordingly, the military profession requires that its members and their organizations must continually prepare for war. The key ingredient in this preparation rests on which war the military is preparing for; a past war or a war of the future. Marines must not rely on the past. The most successful military organizations in history have been better prepared to enter war than their adversaries. History indicates that defeat in war is a costly and gruesome trainer. The time for military reflection and, if appropriate, reform is now.

FMFM-1 demands that Marines of all ranks reflect on the Corps' style of warfighting and institute reforms where reforms are required. Any such reforms should strive for organizational perfection, methodical standardized techniques, producing an intellectual foundation that supports 'warfighting', and improving the synergism and effectiveness of Marine Air Ground Task Forces. The challenge for all Marines is to find ways, not only individually but also collectively, to become better warfighters. Nothing should be more important than preparing to win the next conflict. The time for the Corps to dedicate itself to the task at hand is now.

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER II

MANEUVER WARFARE

"More than most professions, the military is forced to depend upon intelligent interpretation of the past for signposts charting the future...the soldier makes maximum use of historical record in assuring the readiness of himself and his command to function efficiently in emergency. The facts derived from historical analysis, he applies to conditions of the present and the proximate future, thus developing a synthesis of appropriate method, organization and doctrine...."1

The importance of studying military history does not lie in the detail found in past method and technique. Method and technique are greatly influenced by the weapons, equipment, force structure, resources, and command and control capabilities available at a given time. The utility of military history for today's leader lies in the ability to detect those fundamental principles which have been ~~successful~~ in the past and can be applied to the future. These principles know no limitation of time. They are the key elements

upon which successful warfare has been waged. It is from the study of all warfare that the laws of the art of war will be found. Those who have proven most successful in warfare are those who have not only discovered these fundamental truths but have also been able to apply them at the appropriate time and place.

The foundations upon which warfighting is built are based on the theories and principles that have proven successful in the history of warfare. Sun Tzu, Napoleon, Clausewitz, Jomini, Moltke, and many others, along with the German military tradition, have all contributed to the maneuverist method of warfighting. The German military tradition, particularly as developed through three generations of war, has been used by maneuver warfare advocates to describe what successful maneuver warfare can achieve. Prussia's quick and relatively easy victories over the Danes, the Austrians and the French (1864-1871) helped establish the German way of war. German tactical and operational successes in World War I and World War II are attributable to this style of warfare. German failures in the world wars are generally attributed to flaws in their strategic conduct of those wars. Tactically and operationally, the Germans have usually achieved a relative advantage over their enemies. This advantage is based on the style of warfare maneuverists refer to as maneuver warfare.

It is from theory, past experience, and a concept of how the next war will be conducted that doctrine, tactics, and a style of warfare are developed within a military organization. "The Germans had no monopoly on an understanding of military theory, or an ability

to analyze operational experience. Nor did they have a monopoly on military competence. But what they did have was a monopoly on consistently reliable and excellent performance throughout the Army and in accordance with current doctrine and theory."2 The Germans were successful because, as an organization, they collectively understood their style of warfare and, perhaps more importantly, the Germans continually refined their doctrine and tactics, both in times of peace and war.

Maneuver warfare demands that Marines develop an understanding of the theory and nature of war. This style of warfare requires dedication to refining tactics and techniques and coupling these with the theory and nature of warfare. Maneuver warfare is an entire style of warfare. This style of warfare must be grasped as a whole and, during its execution, is situationally dependent. Maneuver warfare is part and parcel of the operational art- deciding what to do tactically in support of operations and strategy. It is both theory and reality. Theory is based on an understanding of the nature of warfare, history, and professional education. Reality is based on the preparation for war and the conduct of war.

The significance of understanding FMFM-1 for a Marine is evident. It is from a collective understanding of warfighting that Marines will be able to correctly prepare for war and, if required, conduct war. Doctrine, tactics, training, and equipping the Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs) of the future will be based on the maneuver warfare style of warfighting. Marines must take a long, hard look at how they are conducting business. They must be strong

enough and smart enough to realize that if they are not getting better, they are at best staying the same. Marine leaders should understand that using today's methods in warfare of the future could be catastrophic. Continuing changes in technology and the proliferation of highly lethal weapon systems worldwide demands that Marines should continually rethink and refine, as required, their methods of warfighting.

Most Marines are by now more than conversant with maneuver warfare concepts. They have read FMFM-1 which offers the following definition of maneuver warfare: "Maneuver warfare is a warfighting philosophy that seeks to shatter the enemy's cohesion through a series of rapid, violent, and unexpected actions which create a turbulent and rapidly deteriorating situation with which he cannot cope."³

Marines are beginning to understand the maneuver warfare concepts of philosophy of command, shaping the battle, decision making, mission tactics, commanders intent, focus of efforts*, surfaces and gaps, and combined arms. What is not well understood is how to apply these concepts.

As in all warfare, maneuver warfare successes and failures are the sole responsibility of the commander. This responsibility applies throughout all levels of command. During the conduct of maneuver style warfare there are three important decisions that the commander

*Focus of efforts is used throughout this study to emphasize that in MAGTF warfighting there is more than one effort being conducted at any given time. The focus of efforts is the 'main effort' in a particular phase of an operation or campaign and it is normally supported by other 'efforts' from within the MAGTF.

must make. They are his intent, his focus of efforts, and the commitment of his reserve. In order to be able to make these decisions, the commander must conceptualize or have a vision of his battlefield. The commander's vision leads directly to the formation of his concept and from his concept comes his intent. Through his vision he is able to determine his focus of efforts, issue his mission type orders, and influence or shape the battlefield. Additionally, his vision will include how he expects to use his reserve. His vision or conceptualization, therefore, is the centerpiece of successful commandership. It is from his vision that the commander is able to formulate, execute, and adjust his plan.

All Marines understand the inherent responsibility of the commander in conducting warfare. Not just at the lower level but at all levels of command. Maneuver warfare concepts, when coupled with the challenges of proper employment of all assets within a MAGTF, demand more of today's senior leaders than in times past. Historically, perhaps the greatest failing of military establishments, prior to entering into warfare, rests with the lack of preparation of senior commanders and their staffs for the conduct of war. "...the prewar experience of senior commanders and staff officers, are -even today- dictated largely by peacetime needs, not by wartime probabilities. Headquarters...habitually expend their time and energies on routine administration, seldom pushing, training, and testing themselves as they push, train and test their troops...the result too often seems to be that the troops, even when

inadequately trained and armed, are readier for war than the men who lead them. The implied lesson is that senior commanders and their staffs (need)...more realistic training exercises for themselves, involving several command levels and arms, that will hone skills that otherwise must be bought with blood and possible defeat."4

In order to test, refine, and institutionalize maneuver warfare doctrine, tactics and techniques, all Marine commanders must incorporate maneuver warfare concepts into their day-to-day operations. Additionally, Marines must challenge these concepts and offer alternative concepts when appropriate. Maneuver warfare's emphasis is currently based on the ground scheme of maneuver, "...all supporting arms and combat service support must be keyed to supporting the ground scheme of maneuver."5 Although the ground scheme of maneuver is undoubtedly important in its place, its place may only be during a single phase of a multi-phased operation or campaign. In the Marine Corps, there is more to maneuver warfare than ground operations. Marines must concentrate on finding ways of helping the MAGTF commander win.

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CHAPTER III

THE MARINE AIR GROUND TASK FORCE

The United States Marine Corps is unique among the world's military organizations. Title 10, U. S. Code legislates that the Marine Corps will consist of the following forces and shall be prepared to provide these key defense functions:

-three combat divisions, three air wings and such other land combat, aviation, and other services that are trained, organized, and equipped to provide Fleet Marine Forces of combined arms for the seizure or defense of advanced naval bases and the conduct of land operations in support of a naval campaign.

-additionally, Marines are to perform other duties as the President may direct.

The Marine Corps' organization for combat is founded upon the unique structure of the Corps' forces. Based on the combined arms concept, Marine Corps doctrine provides that Marine forces will be employed as integrated Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs). "The central operational concept for employing a MAGTF is that it is most

effective in battle when employed as a strategically mobile, combined arms, air-ground-logistics combat force all under a single commander....Organized and employed in this manner, Marine forces fight according to the Marine Corps basic combat doctrine which incorporates maneuver warfare concepts."1

The MAGTF concept has proven itself in past conflicts and continues to have viability and utility well into the 21st century. However, maneuver warfare concepts require a shift in the Corps' traditional thought process. Traditionally, the MAGTF has focused upon the seizure of objectives (usually terrain objectives). This focus naturally emphasizes a ground scheme of maneuver which in turn produces the attitude that all other elements of the MAGTF are in a supporting role to the Ground Combat Element (GCE) commander. This, in and of itself, is certainly not all bad but it does foster an incorrect MAGTF warfighting attitude. The purpose of all forces within the MAGTF is to help the MAGTF commander WIN! This does not mean that the GCE will not normally be the MAGTF's focus of efforts but it does mean that the Aviation Combat Element (ACE) and the Combat Service Support Element (CSSE) must become more proactive in determining how the MAGTF commander can best accomplish his mission. "If maneuver warfare is to be of any value to the Marine Corps, then it must be grafted to the unique missions and requirements of Marines. A Marine adaptation-a version that meets the theoretical and practical needs of Marine-air-ground task forces (MAGTFs)-should emerge. We might call this the art of MAGTF warfare."2

In support of maneuver warfare doctrine, the commander of the MAGTF must be the first to have a 'vision' of what it is he intends to achieve in order to accomplish his mission. The commander's vision, combined with available strategic lift resources, will, for the most part, determine the MAGTF deployment and employment concepts. The synergy and increased tempo required by maneuver doctrine can only be attained when the MAGTF commander correctly chooses, organizes, deploys, employs and shifts his forces in support of his focus of efforts. Through the correct balance and employment of his forces, the MAGTF commander can accelerate or slow the overall tempo of the battle. Once the tempo is controlled, using maneuver warfare concepts, the outcome of the battle should be favorable. Therefore, in future conflict, maneuver warfare doctrine dictates that Marines must learn to operate MAGTFs to their fullest potential.

The shift in how Marines operate has begun. "In keeping with the theory that in order to fight like a MAGTF we should plan like one, wouldn't it be appropriate for the MAGTF staff to develop courses of action for the commander's approval? To take this one step further, it would be possible for the GCE, ACE, and CSSE to develop courses of action during this process based upon specified and implied tasks of the mission."3 The question of just who within the MAGTF should develop courses of action must refer back to the commander's vision. From his vision the commander determines his concept, mission type orders, etc. It is in his concept that the commander determines phasing of the operation or campaign and where the focus of efforts will be in a particular phase. It is from this

vision that schemes of maneuver are developed, tasks are assigned, and forces are allocated. The element/unit assigned a task must develop its own courses of action for its accomplishment. The focus of efforts in each phase, whether ground, air, or logistics in nature, must be supported by all other elements within the MAGTF as required. It is through the command of the MAGTF, and the synergy derived therefrom, that Marines will be successful on the maneuver warfare battlefield.

Marines, especially commanders and staff officers, must develop a thorough understanding of how to best employ MAGTFs using maneuver warfare concepts. This can only be accomplished by understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the MAGTF elements. It is not enough to understand these strengths and weaknesses in theory or doctrinally, they must be understood in reality. True understanding can only be developed through association over time. The relationship between members of MAGTFs must become more long lasting, more permanent.

The success of the Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) (MEU(SOC)) is founded upon its training and the assignment policies of its forces. Each element of the MEU(SOC) has time to develop a thorough understanding of the other elements, to include strengths and weaknesses. This understanding comes from working and training together over time and is reality. From this understanding, this synergy, these small MAGTFs are able to accomplish far more difficult tasks more rapidly, and with a greater chance of success, than their predecessors.

These smaller MAGTFs are able to use maneuver warfare concepts

because theory has become reality for them. They know one another and they have common tactical experiences to draw from. However, these small MAGTFs can only do so much in institutionalizing maneuver warfare in the Corps. Maneuver warfare needs to be institutionalized from the top down. In order to develop, refine, or change doctrine and tactics in support of the maneuver warfare concept, larger MAGTFs must be formed with permanently assigned forces whose primary mission is institutionalizing the Corps' warfighting doctrine of the future.

The benefits of establishing one or more larger MAGTFs, with forces assigned on a permanent basis, are many. In addition to the assigned mission of developing future doctrine for the Corps, this type force could also serve as the Fleet Marine Force's direct interface with the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command. This permanent force would also be extremely capable, on the leading edge of the Corps' doctrine, training and technology, and would also be readily deployable. A MAGTF as described above would be costly to the Corps. However, as the Corps looks to the future and realigns its priorities it should keep in mind that the potential long term rewards of a larger permanent MAGTF are great. Such a force, with a directed mission and focus, could turn theory into reality. Now is the time for the Corps to develop its future roles, missions, doctrine, and tactics. Assigned the primary mission of institutionalizing the Corps' warfighting doctrine, one or more Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEBs), with permanently assigned forces, could turn theory into reality for the Corps.

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CHAPTER IV

THE AVIATION COMBAT ELEMENT

"The truly unique aspect of the MAGTF resides in its Aviation Combat Element (ACE). Marine propaganda aside, the ACE's true value does not lie in its ability to provide close support to the rifleman. The MAGTF structure enables its commander to designate either a ground or air focus of main effort, greatly expanding his ability to keep an enemy off balance."¹

The challenge to Marines is to determine how they can best employ their aviation assets in support of a MAGTF. The strength and utility of Marine aviation is centered on its mobility, speed, range, and lethality. These factors when properly utilized determine the effect Marine aviation can have on the enemy. "Losses versus kills does not describe the effectiveness of air power; tonnage of bombs dropped does not determine the effectiveness of a bombing campaign--both are only indications. The effectiveness of air power is to be judged strictly upon how well aviation does the jobs assigned and how wise are its assignments."²

The current weaknesses of Marine aviation, particularly as it applies to maneuver warfare, are two-fold. First, there currently does not exist a vehicle which ensures that Marine aviators understand why they are assigned a particular mission. Aviators are not normally aware of the overall scheme or the commander's intent. Without this knowledge, how can the ACE best help the MAGTF commander win? Second, the MAGTF ACE is not able to respond rapidly enough to all requirements of the focus of efforts. Rarely does a supported unit feel that its support could not have been more timely or that more support could have been provided. In essence, these are command, control, and coordination problems. These are not just aviation problems, they are MAGTF problems. These weaknesses become more pronounced the larger the MAGTF becomes.

Fundamental to these weaknesses are the basing and support requirements of aviation assets. The ACE headquarters and many of its assets are normally far removed from the other headquarters of the MAGTF. Additionally, the centralized control and decentralized execution doctrine of Marine aviation is a process which can require long lead times prior to execution. Adding to the user's time delay, the larger the MAGTF the more layers of command the Marine must go through to receive any type of support external to his unit. This current process of how the ACE operates within the MAGTF is what must be fixed!

From the Marine aviation perspective, modification or change is possible today. Based on current guidance, that Marines will fight as a Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), it is at the Marine Air Wing

(MAW) level that modification or change must first be instituted. The MAW must become proactive in its support for the MEF commander. How can the largest ACE help the MAGTF commander win? First, the MAW commander must be readily available to the MAGTF commander, and the other element commanders, in order to fully understand and help formulate the commander's vision, concept, and intent. The MAGTF 'Air Officer' should not be allowed to perform this function for the MAW commander. Second, the MAW commander must be prepared to provide assets in direct support of the focus of efforts or other missions as required. This is in conflict with the centralized control concept that exists today and will require a change in both doctrine and attitude. And third, the MAW commander must be prepared to perform as the focus of efforts when designated as such. This includes not only requesting but tasking support assets from within the MAGTF when required for the mission.

The MAW commander understands better than anyone the strengths and weaknesses of his forces. He is better able to determine their capabilities and therefore their proper employment. In maneuver warfare, major element commanders of the MAGTF must not only command their forces but must also serve as special advisors to the MAGTF commander. In order to help the MAGTF commander win, in training and in combat, the major element commanders must become a permanent part of the MAGTF commander's planning and decision cycle.

One of the fundamentals of maneuver warfare is that the focus of efforts receives all the support needed to accomplish the mission. Within the Division (DIV) and the Force Service Support

Group (FSSG), task organizations are formed relatively quickly and easily. The focus of efforts, when based on a ground scheme of maneuver, receives those units, personnel, and equipment (tanks, engineers, trucks, artillery, etc.) from Marine ground units to accomplish its mission. The focus of efforts is usually given 'priority of air' from the aviation assets available. This priority may or may not be responsive to the focus of efforts when it is most needed. It must be remembered that any plan for combat is subjected to chance and the 'fog of war'. Thereafter, flexibility and rapid response are required to ensure success. Aviation, like other combat and support capabilities, must be furnished directly to the user in order to provide the flexibility and timeliness required to achieve maximum results.

The aviation support provided a MEF's focus of efforts (nominally an infantry regiment (reinforced)) should be based on a unit that is permanently organized, trained, and equipped to provide the required support. The support envisioned includes close air support (CAS), assault support, resupply, medevac, reconnaissance, screening, airborne jamming, close in air defense, etc. Additionally, the aviation support provided the focus of efforts must be self-supporting (ie. provide its own logistics support, communications, security, etc.). The personnel and equipment required to perform the above functions would be most productive if they were permanently assigned to a single Marine Air Group (MAG). Today this type of MAG should consist of a headquarters, AV-8's, AH-1's,

CH-46's, CH-53's, UH-1N's, OV-10's, Light Anti-air Defense (LAAD), Remotely Piloted Vehicles (RPV)*, a Marine Aviation Logistic Squadron (MALs), and a Marine Wing Support Squadron (MWSS). Ideally, each MAW would form three of these type MAGs, permanently organized, containing the above mentioned assets. The assets within these MAGs would then train together and form an habitual relationship with a Marine regiment and, when assigned, with a MEB command element. Remembering that Marines will fight as MEFs, MAGs so configured would normally remain as MAW assets and could become the MAW focus of efforts or be in direct support of the ground focus of efforts. This type MAG could also reinforce another MAG in supporting the focus of efforts, could be assigned a supporting effort, or even be held in reserve. Lastly, when required, this MAG could serve as a ready made ACE for a MEB size MAGTF. Other MAW assets not mentioned would not normally be assigned a direct support mission but would remain under the continuous control of the MAW commander.

There are of course many challenges associated with restructuring the MAW. Tactics and doctrine will have to be developed and written. Logistics, facilities and the requirement for procuring new items of equipment will be expensive and difficult. However, the potential advantages for the operational success of the MAGTF and the Marine Corps far outweigh the costs associated with this change. A change of this nature is the first major step for Marine aviation in support of the Corps' maneuver warfare concepts. Once a MAG as described above is formed on a permanent basis, Marines *RPVs are not currently part of the MAW.

will do as they have always done; they will find the best way to do the job. Marine aviation in support of maneuver warfare will move from theory to reality.

In Marine aviation, maneuver warfare concepts are limited only by the imagination. In defensive warfare, the greatest service the ACE can perform for the MAGTF, and more specifically the GCE, is not CAS. Rather, it is to shape the battle so as to help the MAGTF commander win. Ideally, the ACE should stop enemy forces prior to their reaching the main battle area. If this is not possible, the ACE should strive to control the flow of enemy forces (ground and air) into the main battle area at a rate which the ground defenders can attrite them. This failing, the ACE must assist in the final protective fires, be prepared to counter any breakthroughs, and finally, support the counter-attack. These are not the only functions of the ACE in the defense. One need only use his imagination to envision teams of AH-1's, UH-1N's, (with ground troops embarked), and LAV's working together in answer to rear area security or MAGTF screening taskings. Potential aviation missions are limitless.

In the offense, Marine aviation is particularly well suited to maneuver warfare concepts. The mobility, speed, and range of aviation is a combat multiplier on the maneuver battlefield when employed correctly. The "Recon Pull" technique is an example. An armed reconnaissance flight of AV-8's finds a weakness in the enemy's defenses. A coordinated attack of AV-8's, AH-1's, and artillery is

brought to bear on the enemy weakness. A mechanized force punches through the weakened enemy lines while the MAGTF reserve is passing overhead in helicopters to attack the enemy's vulnerable rear area. Other aviation assets are dispatched to the enemy's rear to take advantage of the situation, disrupt his command and control, and seek out and destroy his reserve.

The above scenario is possible because the aviation forces are forward deployed and in direct support of the focus of efforts. The aviators understood the commander's intent and concept of operations. This ACE was proactive, flexible and provided timely responses to the needs of the supported unit. The aviators were task organized into a permanent MAG and through their integrated MAGTF training developed the procedures and techniques that allowed them to get inside the enemy's decision cycle and win.

Aviation assets can screen, can reinforce, can be the reserve, can form hunter/killer teams, can be the focus of efforts, etc., etc. The situation confronted by the MAGTF commander will determine how Marine Air can best help him win. Only through fully integrated training and a full and total understanding of strengths and weaknesses developed in peacetime, can Marines develop the MAGTF maneuver warfare doctrine that will save lives and ensure a reasonable chance for success in combat.

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

It is a generally accepted belief that bureaucracies resist change. The Marine Corps, at times, can be a very bureaucratic organization. Those that resist change do so on the premise that the Marine Corps is not broken. Truly, the Marine Corps has proven to be one of the world's most outstanding military organizations. But the question should not be, "how good is the Marine Corps of today?", rather it should be, "how can the Marine Corps become more combat capable?". The answer lies in the Corps' ability to seek out tactics and doctrine that will increase its warfighting capabilities. FMFM-1 provides the broad conceptional foundation from which to begin.

Marine Corps policy and procedural changes are in order if the Corps is to "lean forward" and improve its warfighting abilities. Change is an inflammatory word for many. Fortunately, the changes required are more of policy refinement than of radical policy change. The one change that would have the greatest effect is in personnel assignments. Relationships between commanders and units

within the MAGTF are developed over time. Without shared common experiences, MAGTFs will have to rely on the theory contained in manuals. Theory, however well written and understood, cannot adequately substitute for reality when it comes to commander's intent, mission orders, and synergism within the MAGTF. Without personnel assignment policy changes, Marines will continue to be less effective than they have the potential to be. The question is, "will MAGTFs, when called upon to serve our nation, be good enough to do the job assigned?". The future of the Marine Corps may be riding on the answer to this question.

Marines need to capitalize on the uniqueness of their air-ground-logistics team. The focus of the Corps must be on the MAGTF, and not on a single element contained within the MAGTF. To this end, all elements must become more proactive. Element commanders must be involved in helping the MAGTF commander formulate his concept. This cannot be adequately accomplished on a radio, via message traffic, or with a liaison officer. Direct, frequent contact between commanders within the MAGTF is essential in order to achieve a common understanding and to obtain the greatest effect from the MAGTF.

Marines must accept FMFM-1 as an entire style of warfighting. Marines at all levels must become involved in adopting its concepts or in offering alternatives. It is time to move from theorizing about maneuver warfare to its implementation. Implementation must be accomplished within the Fleet Marine Force. The need for reducing command, control, and coordination difficulties within the MAGTF is

evident. Speed of action is critical to success on the maneuver warfare battlefield. The focus of efforts must not only be assigned the combat power to accomplish the mission it must also have the ability to directly control this combat power. Without direct control of all assets, the focus of efforts will not be able to respond rapidly enough to changing situations.

The Corps has devoted a great deal of time and resources to developing aviation assets that can be forward based and provide direct support to ground commanders when the situation warrants this type of support. It would seem logical then that the next step would be to permanently organize an aviation force that could provide this type of support. Although the groundwork has been laid in doctrine and tactics for forward basing aviation assets in support of ground commanders, the procedures and techniques of implementation in support of maneuver warfare concepts require further refinement. This can only be accomplished over time between forces that do not have to continually reinvent the wheel with each new evolution.

Finally, Marines must admit that they can become better warfighters. If the Corps is not willing to move forward, then it is relegated to marking time. Marines have always been on the leading edge of doctrine, tactics, and technology. The desire to become more effective combatants should serve as the driving force in leading to any required reform or changes. The challenge for all Marines is to continue to move the Corps forward and to be more combat capable tomorrow than today.

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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) - With the publication of FMFM-1 on the 6th of March, 1989 Maneuver Warfare officially became the Marine Corps' doctrine for warfighting. This doctrine is still not well understood Corps wide and is certainly not understood in the context of employment of Marine Air Ground Task Forces. This study has a target audience of U.S. Marines and has been written based on a Marine's understanding of maneuver warfare concepts. This study seeks to examine		

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maneuver warfare as it applies to Marines today. Initially, the study examines the role military history, particularly the German experience, has had in the formation of the concepts associated with maneuver warfare. The study also addresses the responsibility of the commander as this responsibility applies to maneuver warfare concepts and techniques. Further, this study examines the applicability of maneuver warfare to the Marine Air Ground Task Force. Additionally, the study assesses the impact of maneuver warfare doctrine on Marine Aviation and in turn the impact Marine Aviation can have on this philosophy of warfighting. Finally, conclusions are drawn based on this study.

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